

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Ms. HERSETH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take the time of the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from South Dakota?

There was no objection.

ETHANOL'S POSITIVE ENERGY BALANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from South Dakota (Ms. HERSETH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. HERSETH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to again set the record straight regarding one of the persistent urban myths about ethanol and other renewable fuels. Yet again in the past couple of weeks I read about another study that contains faulty and outdated assumptions, analysis and conclusions about the net energy balance of producing renewable fuels like ethanol and biodiesel.

Whether produced from corn or other grains or biomass, ethanol production has matured into an extremely energy-efficient process. As you would expect with any developing industry, technological advances have greatly improved these efficiencies over the years. Unfortunately, some academic studies choose to ignore these improvements.

Farmers are much more efficient today than they were in years past. They get more bushels of corn from an acre of land than we did 25 years ago. Some areas have seen yield improvements of 45 percent or more. Moreover, they do it using far less energy. Farmers today use precision and no-till farming to greatly reduce tillage trips and chemical applications. The efficiency of fertilizer and pesticide production also has greatly improved over the years.

What is more, the process of turning this corn into ethanol has greatly improved. Mechanical and biological advancements in the process mean that we get more ethanol from a bushel of corn than we used to. All of these developments have a significant and positive impact on the net energy balance of ethanol production.

This fact has been confirmed by countless analyses. A recent study by the Department of Energy's Argonne National Laboratory found that for every 100 BTUs of energy used to produce ethanol, 135 BTUs of ethanol are produced. That is because corn plants are extremely efficient solar panels. USDA analysis has found that corn farmers use about half the energy

to produce a bushel of corn than they did just 25 years ago.

And the industry is not resting on its laurels. Research continues into ethanol production from feed stock such as rice straw, corn stover, and sugar cane waste. These should even further reduce fossil energy use and improve net energy balance. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, ethanol produced from these sources generates 13.2 BTUs of energy for every BTU of fossil energy consumed.

Finally, I will share with my colleagues an important point that was raised yesterday in an Agriculture Committee hearing on renewable fuels. Calculating and arguing over the net energy balance of ethanol, petroleum and any other energy source is not even the most relevant inquiry. From an economic standpoint, the pertinent question really should be, what does it cost to put a gallon of fuel in my gas tank when and where I want to?

Based on that inquiry, ethanol is clearly winning that contest today. Today in Sioux Falls, South Dakota you can go to any Get-n-Go gas station in the city and purchase a gallon of E85, a blend of 85 percent ethanol and 15 percent gasoline for \$1.79, whereas a gallon of premium gasoline costs \$2.39. If you know how frugal South Dakotans are, I do not have to tell you which pump they are lining up behind.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take my Special Order at this time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Connecticut?

There was no objection.

9/11 COMMISSION REPORT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHAYS. A year ago today, the 9/11 Commission released its report. This report outlined 41 recommendations to protect this Nation from future terrorist attacks.

It is crucial we ensure the implementation of these recommendations.

The 9/11 Commission produced what I feel is a sacred document. Their conduct should bring pride to all Americans because they realized that their mission was larger than partisan politics and acted accordingly.

They completed this undertaking with determination, clarity, and vision. On behalf of a grateful Nation, we pledge to continue to work to make their entire vision reality.

Congress and the administration have made many significant changes over the years to improve the security of the homeland. The Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act signed by the President in December of 2004 was a critical step forward in reor-

ganizing our intelligence community, creating a Director of National Intelligence with personnel and budgetary authority, creating in statute a National Counterterrorism Center, improving our transportation security, and making important immigration reforms.

There are still challenges, however, that need to be met. The Privacy and Civil Liberties Board established by the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act, for example, should be operating and should be mandated with robust powers to oversee the government's adherence to the guidelines set forth by the 9/11 Commission. This board is critical in ensuring a balance between civil liberties and security.

In addition, more attention needs to be given to aviation security, mass transit issues, and first responders. We need to inspect air cargo that rides in the hold of passenger aircraft, and we must tighten security around mass transit areas.

Furthermore, our first responders must have appropriate communications.

Finally, the 9/11 Commission concluded that Congress needed to dramatically strengthen oversight and focus accountability. The commission recommended a single principal point of oversight and review for homeland security in each House of Congress, preferably a standing committee on homeland security and dedicated appropriations subcommittees on intelligence. We have a dedicated committee in the House of Representatives on homeland security, but it needs to be strengthened.

The Senate still does not have such a committee for Homeland Security.

Today's anniversary reminds us how important it is we implement the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission and how important it is we protect our Nation from those who would do us harm.

TRIBUTE TO THE SOLIDARITY TRADE UNION IN POLAND

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the workers of the Solidarity Trade Union in Poland. On August 30 we will celebrate the 25th anniversary of the worker strikes in Poland that led to the unprecedented establishment of the Solidarity Trade Union.

At the end of the Second World War, Poland was forcefully incorporated into the Soviet Union's Communist Bloc. By 1980, they endured decades of communism, with endemic corruption, the lies of its press, and its denial of basic human and worker rights.

Although major strikes and uprisings had taken place, all of them had been put down violently by military forces and the leaders had been arrested.